

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

FEBRUARY 6, 2003

The regular meeting of the City Planning Commission convened Thursday, February 6, 2003 at 1:33 pm in the City Council Chambers, 333 W. Ocean Boulevard.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS: Nick Sramek, Charles Greenberg, Thomas Fields, Randal Hernandez, Lynn Moyer, Gregg Whelan, Charles Winn

CHAIRMAN: Nick Sramek

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Gene Zeller, Director of Planning & Bldg.
Greg Carpenter, Zoning Officer
Jayme Mekis, Planner II
Angela Reynolds, Advance Planning Officer

OTHERS PRESENT: Heather Mahood, Deputy City Attorney
Marcia Gold, Minutes Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Advance Planning Officer Angela Reynolds led the pledge of allegiance.

MINUTES

The minutes of November 21, 2002 and December 5, 2002 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Winn, seconded by Commissioner Moyer and passed 6-0-1. Commissioner Greenberg abstained on both sets of minutes.

SWEARING OF WITNESSES

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar was approved on a motion by Commissioner Greenberg, seconded by Commissioner Whelan and passed unanimously.

1A. Mills Act Historic Property Contract

Applicant: Cultural Heritage Commission
Subject Site: 1327 Linden Avenue
Description: A Mills Act Historic Property Contract for 1327 Linden Avenue.

Approved the execution of a Mills Act Historic Property Contract between the City and the owner of 1327 Linden Avenue.

1B. Historic Landmark Designation

Applicant: Cultural Heritage Commission
Subject Site: 5725 Corso di Napoli
Description: Crandell/Howard House, constructed 1906-7.

Recommended that the Long Beach City Council adopt an ordinance designating the Crandell/Howard House at 5725 Corso di Napoli as a Long Beach Historic Landmark.

1C. Historic Landmark Designation

Applicant: Cultural Heritage Commission
Subject Site: 380 Orlena Avenue
Description: Kimpson/Nixon House, constructed 1940.

Recommended that the Long Beach City Council adopt an ordinance designating the Kimpson/Nixon House at 380 Orlena Avenue as a Long Beach Historic Landmark.

1D. Case No. 0204-47, Standards Variance, CE 02-82

Applicant: Bozena Jaworski
Appellant: Rick Lepionka and D'lorah Hunt
Subject Site: 905 Orange Avenue
Description: Appeal of the Zoning Administrator's decision to approve a Standards Variance request for a 6' tall fence and entry gate (instead of not more than 4' tall) at the front property line of an institutionally zoned property.

The application was withdrawn, and no action was taken.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. Case No. 0212-05, Waived Tentative Parcel Map, CE 02-187

Applicant: Gary Gensemer for Trendmaker Development, Inc.
Subject Site: 501 & 503 Park Avenue
Description: Approval of Vesting Tentative Parcel Map No. 0212-05 for the purpose of creating two single family residences on two lots on the R-1-N (Single Family Residential) Zone District.

Jayne Mekis presented the staff report recommending approval of the request since the design and improvements of the proposed subdivision were consistent with zoning regulations and the General Plan, and because the project would provide increased home ownership opportunities.

In response to a query from Commissioner Winn, Mr. Carpenter explained that the project was not precedent setting because the area was historically subdivided with 25 foot lots, and that this lot was unique due to its large size.

Gary Gensemer, 511 Quincy, applicant, noted that the project exceeded open space requirements, and would create unique and classic homes compatible with the area.

George Verbryck, 519 Park Avenue, stated he was against the project and claimed that the homes as proposed were inconsistent with frontage and lot size requirement, and would violate the R-1-N requirement. Mr. Verbryck also said he had submitted a petition signed by some area residents also in opposition.

In response to queries from Commissioner Greenberg as to how the applicant should develop the property, Mr. Verbryck said he thought one single-family house could be build with larger setbacks. Commissioner Winn acknowledged the profusion of two-story homes on the street permitted by code, and pointed out that the R-1-N designation was meant to discourage the building of duplexes, not single family homes.

Mr. Gensemer noted that if he did not get approval on the project, he could then build an oversized single family home within code, but that would not match the character of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Greenberg agreed that the project should be approved, since the R-1-N zone provided for the kind of relief being requested, and since the proposed design and size of homes were consistent with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Greenberg then moved to approve the Waived Tentative Parcel Map, subject to conditions. Commissioner Whelan seconded the motion.

Commissioner Whelan agreed that two smaller homes would look much better than a larger house, and that the project would enhance real estate values.

Commissioner Hernandez agreed that the larger, build-to-code home could be up to 6,000 square feet, and that the proposed homes were much more compatible.

The question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

MATTERS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no matters from the audience.

MATTERS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

Mr. Zeller updated the Commission on City Council actions, including the Westminster to 2nd Street name change approval and the Roswell Assistance League zone change request, which had been withdrawn.

Mr. Zeller also stated that the Redevelopment Agency and Planning staffs were continuing to move forward with the creation of a coordinated design review process.

MATTERS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Commissioner Greenberg asked that CEQA exemption language be specifically quoted in staff reports to assist the Commissioners in reaching their decisions.

Mr. Greenberg also noted that Belmont Shore residents had expressed concerns about underparking due to the profusion of restaurant uses in the area, and he asked if perhaps if a change in use led to less parking demand, the new applicant should have to return the parking rights, which Commissioner Winn thought was a good idea, but politically problematic. Mr. Greenberg said he thought this was dooming new applicants to maintaining whatever use was already in place.

In response to another query from Commissioner Greenberg regarding environmentally friendly City and infrastructure planning, Mr. Zeller stated that the City was moving toward environmentally friendly policies and totally "green" projects. He also noted that if approved, the PacificCenter would be the largest project in the country to meet "green" building guidelines, which would prove eventually to be a great selling tool, proving such policies made good business sense.

Commissioner Hernandez then asked if it was appropriate for the Commission to hear about environmental policies within the context of budget constraints, so they would know if some projects would be slowed down by these developing changes. Mr. Zeller explained that the Planning Department was mostly self-supporting, driven by costs and revenues, while Advance and Community Planning and Code Enforcement were more vulnerable to cost-cutting measures.

Chairman Sramek noted that one local group had asked the Commission to take action on a Long Beach Airport Master Plan, and the City Attorney stated that it was not appropriate for the Commission to get involved at this point, except to gather information. Commissioner Whelan added that the specific group referred to was openly opposed to any airport expansion.

Commissioner Fields asked that the Commission remain updated on the expansion issue. Mr. Greenberg echoed the concerns and added that he wanted input from a land use perspective.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Gold
Minutes Clerk